

**ATLAS OF PELVIC OPERATIONS.** Langdon Parsons, M.D., Professor of Gynecology, Boston University School of Medicine; and Howard Ulfelder, M.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Gynecology, Harvard Medical School. Illustrated by Mildred B. Godding, A.B., M.A. W. B. Saunders Company, Philadelphia, 1953. 231 pages, \$18.00.

This is a book of handsome appearance that captures one's interest from the outset. This atlas of pelvic operations differs in many ways from others because of its evident simplicity in depicting operative procedure by means of line drawings, which have the advantage over colored illustrations by impressing themselves more lastingly upon the mind of the average student seeking to create a reliable graphic memory of technical sequence.

The authors are attached to several well known Boston hospitals, where surgical gynecology is well standardized, and what they are depicting are standard procedures as practiced in these hospitals, admitting frankly however, that there are other techniques practiced with equal success elsewhere. Long practice and much experience allows the authors to feel that what they have depicted is good pelvic surgery and your reviewer agrees with them heartily.

A careful page by page perusal of this attractive atlas leaves one with the impression that the authors' intent in creating this atlas was to reduce technical details to their demonstrable minimum, and not to impress the tyro-gynecologist with an oversimple approach to pelvic surgery. For any student of gynecologic operations the many line drawings, with brief but adequate descriptions in juxtaposition, will serve as an excellent guide to the acquisition of a good graphic memory, albeit sound training and long experience still are the only reliable avenues leading to surgical perfection.

Aside from demonstrating the successive steps in pelvic operations, the atlas is full of helpful hints on how to avoid trouble. Indications for or against a particular surgical approach have been intentionally omitted because the authors are aware that there always is room for another opinion.

Besides the descriptions of many gynecologic operations covering everything from the simplest plastic corrections to the most radical operations for malignant disease, the atlas goes extensively into technical details of intestinal and ureteral operations to cover emergencies not too infrequently encountered in the course of technically difficult or radical operations, including techniques of ureteral transplantations and vein ligations for thrombosis. In summa, the atlas adequately covers all operations a good gynecologic surgeon should be equipped with.

The volume is dedicated to Dr. Joe Meigs, under whose tutelage the authors gained their experience. Miss Mildred Godding, Surgical Illustrator for Harvard Medical School contributed much to the attractiveness of the atlas by adhering strictly to technical simplicity, however, without sacrificing the expressive artistry of line drawings. W. B. Saunders Company, as always, did such a good job in turning out a fine piece of printing and binding that, on seeing the atlas, one of my younger associates remarked that it was worthy of the best of the medical carriage trade, which about expresses the general attractiveness of the tome.

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**REVIEW OF PHYSIOLOGICAL CHEMISTRY—4th Edition—**Harold A. Harper, Ph.D., Professor of Biochemistry, University of San Francisco, Lange Medical Publications, University Medical Publishers, P.O. Box 1215, Los Altos, California, 1953. 328 pages, \$4.00.

Well-received by California medicine as the third edition in 1951, this unpretentious volume has now been brought up to date. Its clinical orientation should assure it a good reception among medical students, as well as physicians young in years or in mind.

**DIAGNOSIS OF ACUTE ABDOMINAL PAIN.** William Requarth, M.D., Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery, University of Illinois College of Medicine. The Year Book Publishers, Inc., 1953. 243 pages, \$5.00.

There is scarcely a day in the active work of the general practitioner or of the general surgeon when he is not called upon to diagnose the cause of acute abdominal pain and to determine whether or not operation is indicated to remove that cause.

In this well-written book of 243 pages the author has presented an old story in a new and attractive form and has compressed into short space a number of practical points and a series of helpful illustrations.

Through the entire nine chapters there runs the basic philosophic concept of emphasis upon fundamentals to the end that the need for surgery should be determined as soon as it is humanly possible and that surgery should be performed at the earliest possible time in order that the patient may benefit most.

Consistent with this, the author first discusses in Chapter I, Examination of the Abdomen, in which inspection, palpation, percussion, and auscultation, bimanual examination and laboratory aids, are given their appropriate place in diagnosis.

Chapter II, Differential Diagnosis from Standpoint of Location and Type of Pain, is a new approach to the subject. Appropriate emphasis is given to the differential diagnosis of lower abdominal pain, to that of upper abdominal pain, and stress is placed upon the need for good clinical judgment.

Because the author believes that acute intestinal obstruction is one of the most important causes of acute abdominal pain, he devotes Chapter III to a thoroughgoing discussion of it. There is outlined in some detail the differential diagnosis of mechanical obstruction from ileus, the differentiation between small and large bowel obstruction, a discussion of strangulation, and the diagnosis of the specific cause of obstruction. While operative techniques are not emphasized, reference on occasion is made to the indicated procedure.

Another departure in the presentation of this subject is represented in Chapter IV entitled Diseases for Which Immediate Operation Is Imperative, and Chapter V, Diseases for Which Operation Can Be Delayed.

Chapter VI, Diseases for Which Operation Is Contra-indicated or Harmful, stresses the abdominal manifestations of the acute respiratory infections, abdominal pain of acute enteritis, mesenteric lymphadenitis, the abdominal pain experienced in rheumatic fever, and the rarer conditions evidenced by spontaneous hemorrhage into the rectus abdominis muscle, abdominal pain in malaria, abdominal pain in sickle cell anemia. Also, acute pancreatitis is given considerable space in differential diagnosis as are the urologic causes of abdominal pain. Coronary occlusion, dissecting aneurysm of the aorta, and the abdominal pain of herpes zoster, all receive appropriate attention, as does the abdominal pain occurring with spontaneous pneumothorax and that of the gastric crisis of tabes dorsalis. This is a particularly interesting chapter and outlines the pitfalls of which one must always be aware.

Chapter VII, Traumatic Wounds of the Abdomen, covers this subject in a workmanlike manner.

Chapter IX, Differential Diagnosis of Acute Gastroesophageal Hemorrhage, is timely and factual.

In summary, this book is at once a text and an excellent manual of reference for any practitioner who is responsible for the care of a patient presenting the symptom of acute abdominal pain.